



DEMONIC POSSESSION

THE NATURE OF DEMONS

Mages who have completed their Harrowing have proven that they are able to defend themselves from the demons that live in The Fade and as such they are safely able to use their magic without fear of drawing a demon's attention.

However, mages who have not undergone the Harrowing or faced a demon are not yet equipped to defend themselves and risk drawing the eye of a demon every time they cast one of their spells. Each time a mage casts a spell of first level or higher the DM may ask them to roll a d20. If the result is less than or equal to the level of the spell cast the character has drawn the gaze of a demon and gains the following flaw:

Flaw: *A demon has noticed my powers and is watching for signs of weakness.*

The DM then chooses or rolls on the following table to determine the type of demon that now watches the character. Statistics for these demons are presented in a separate PDF, linked at the end of this document.

DEMONS OF THE FADE

d8 d8	Demon Type Demon Type Desire
2	Despair
3	Envy
4	Fear
5	Hunger
6	Pride
7	Rage
8	Sloth

MAGE

For the purposes of this document the term **Mage** refers to any full class spellcaster such as Bard, Druid, Cleric, Sorcerer and Wizard. It is up to the DM if they wish to apply these rules to other half or third class spellcasters such as Arcane Trickster and Paladin.

These optional rules do not affect warlocks, who will be addressed in a separate document.

DEMONIC INFLUENCE

Once a character has drawn the attention of a demon, that character's life becomes considerably more difficult. From that moment on the mage is subject to the following rules:

Demonic Influence: The demon begins trying to assert some semblance of control over the mage, attempting to fracture their psyche in order to gain control of a weakened mind. The player (or the DM) must now track the influence that the demon has over the affected character. The Demonic Influence level starts at 0 and increases whenever the character fails a Demonic Influence saving throw.

DEMONIC INFLUENCE LEVEL

Level Effect

- 1 Bout of short-term madness (lasts 1d10 minutes).
- 2 Bout of long-term madness (lasts 1d10 x 10 hours).
- 3+ Bout of indefinite madness (lasts until cured).

When the characters Demonic Influence level increases they immediately suffer the effect of that level. The Madness tables referenced here are presented on page 259 of the Dungeon Master's Guide.

If the character's Demonic Influence level is ever greater than their spellcasting ability modifier they immediately fall unconscious and must **Face The Demon**.

Spellcasting: Any time the mage casts a spell they must roll a saving throw equal to 10 + the spell's level. The type of saving throw used is determined by the character's spellcasting ability, i.e. Intelligence for a Wizard, Wisdom for a Cleric etc. On a failed save the player gains a level of Demonic Influence.

Haunted Dreams: When a creature sleeps, their spirit enters The Fade and is thereby closer to the influence of demons. Any time the character takes a long rest they must roll a d20. If the result is less than or equal to the character's Demonic Influence level they gain a level of Demonic Influence. Additionally they gain a level of exhaustion as their sleep has been haunted by disturbing visions and nightmares.

FACE THE DEMON

Whether through making an active decision or through falling unconscious when their Demonic Influence level rises too high, at some point the mage will have to face the demon that stalks them. How this plays out is entirely up to the DM but should also be influenced by the type of demon that is stalking the mage as well as the mage's own actions throughout this ordeal. Confronting a Desire demon may be an entirely social encounter whereas confronting a demon of Rage will almost certainly end in violence.

If the character has been forced into The Fade through an increase in their Demonic Influence level then they will almost certainly have to face the demon alone. The DM may even rule that any ability checks or saving throws while in The Fade are at disadvantage in order to reflect the cracking and weakened state of the characters mind.

If the mage decides of their own volition to enter The Fade and face the demon then they must perform a ritual similar to the one used in the Harrowing of a Circle Mage. This knowledge is not freely available and how the character acquires this ritual is left up to the DM. There may also be other ways to enter The Fade and even bring others with you - the character may seek out ancient Elven knowledge or forbidden blood magic in order to find a way to defeat the demon. The exact specifics are left up to the DM and the players.

RESOLUTION

There are only two outcomes from facing a demon.

The first is that the character defeats the demon and is freed from its influence. The mage immediately loses any forms of madness they may have, as well as the flaw gained when the demon first noticed them. From that moment on the mage is no longer subject to the Demonic Influence rules presented here and can cast spells with impunity.

The second is that the demon takes control of the mage's body and mind, becoming an abomination. This may happen if the mage is killed in The Fade, allowing the demon to freely take over the mage's body; or it might be the case that the mage freely accepts the demon, either through being coerced or through the promise of power. Whatever the cause, the character immediately becomes an NPC under the DM's control and it is up to them how this new abomination acts.

NOTES & CREDITS

Created by Emmet Byrne (/u/Emmetation).

Based on the lore of the Dragon Age games, created by Bioware.

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VERSION 0.2

